

# **Sleeper**

## **(1973) (Comedy)**

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### **Major Characters**

**Miles Monroe.....Woody Allen**

Owner of the "Happy Carrot Health Food Store" in New York City. He checks into a hospital for a minor operation, but ends up being frozen for 200 years before being unfrozen in the year 2173.

**Luna.....Diane Keaton**

A very bad poet and artist living in the year 2173 who meets Miles, and eventually joins him in a revolutionary underground movement to overthrow the repressive government.

**Erno.....John Beck**

The young, muscular leader of the underground trying to overthrow the government.

### **Plot Summary**

Miles Monroe is a quintessential Jewish New Yorker, making a living as the owner of a Health Food Store in Greenwich Village in Manhattan (New York City). After checking into a hospital for a minor operation, Miles is unexpectedly frozen (with "cryogenic technology"). He is shocked to discover that he has woken up in the year 2173, 200 years after he initially went to the hospital.

Miles is thawed out (unfrozen) by doctors working in an underground revolutionary movement that is determined to overthrow the current repressive government. The year 2173 is dominated by a police state where everyone has a computerized record, but Miles has no official identification number. He is therefore chosen to lead an expedition to find out about a special government project that other units of the underground are planning to prevent.

Miles is a typical coward, but he has no choice, and thus begins his journey. On the way, he meets Luna, who initially is very much against the revolutionary movement, but soon joins the underground when her own life is threatened by the police. Eventually, Miles and Luna are able to infiltrate the highest levels of government, and accomplish their mission.

"Sleeper" is a very funny movie that helped establish Woody Allen as one of America's best comic directors. There is much good colloquial language (including a lot of futuristic vocabulary), and despite the fact that it takes place in 2173, it is a good look into the fears, concerns and obsessions of late 20th Americans.

### **Some Words and Expressions that You may not Know**

***Miles Monroe, health food store owner in 1973 New York, finds himself awoken from an operation 200 years late.***

Everything is on for tonight.

If something is "on for" a particular time, it is still planned to happen.

Argon thinks that they're on to us.

If you are "on to someone," you know what they are planning.

The capsule was perfectly in tact.

Another way to say unharmed, or like new.

He's been under for 200 years.

Here, a colloquial way to say unconscious.

Encephalic activity.

A very technical expression referring to brain waves.

A personal artifacts kit.

"Artifacts" are simply man-made objects that people from a different place or time would find of interest (tools, magazines, clothes, etc.).

A "kit" is usually a little box, often made of metal.

A minor peptic ulcer.

A common lesion or sore in the stomach that can be very irritating.

Cryogenic immersion.

"Cryogenics" is the science of freezing the living in order to preserve life. "Immersion" is the process of being surrounded, in this case by a freezing chemical.

St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village in 1973.

The place and time where Miles went in to have his ulcer treated. Greenwich Village is a famous neighborhood in new York City.

We got to get him ambulatory.

An educated adjective meaning able to walk.

We're getting a misread on the power function.

A "misread" is an unexpected reading or result, often from a machine.

He's not over the effects of a new ray.

"To be over" something is to be fully recovered from it.

A "ray" refers to a type of x-ray or other microwave.

If he's convulsing, it can be dangerous.

"To convulse" is to shake violently.

He's fully recovered except for a few minor kinks.

A good word for a muscle spasm or any peculiar irritation

(Also the name of a truly great British Rock group).

Wheat germ, organic rice.

"Wheat germ" is a type of food that became extremely popular among health food fans in the 1970s. Any food that is "organic" is made naturally, without chemicals.

What about deep fat, hot fudge?

A wonderful type of chocolate sauce, often served with vanilla ice cream.

He was off by 199 years.

To be "off by" a certain number, is to have inaccurately guessed by that amount.

***Miles starts to realize where he is (or more specifically, what year it is).***

A miracle of science.

A common phrase which shows respect for a new technology.

A cosmic screwing.

"To be screwed" is generally to be mistreated, and thus this is a clever way to refer to abuse by God or the universe in general.

Reviving him was in strict opposition to government policy.

"To revive" someone is to wake them if they are unconscious.

Your brain will be electrically simplified.

A funny way to say that "All of your memories will be eliminated."

A growing underground.

In a political context, "the underground" refers to secret groups that are illegal, who are often trying to overthrow the government.

If I don't get 600 years sleep, I'm grouchy.

A great little adjective meaning irritable, or in a bad mood.

The 10 Most-Wanted List.

A famous list of the most wanted criminals in the country.

He's ranting.

"To rant" is to speaking violently and loudly.

I bought Polaroid at 7. It's probably up millions by now!

A reference to the price of stock for Polaroid, which is a well known camera company.

Bello Legosi.

A famous actor from the 1930s who played "Dracula."

English majors.

A student's "major" refers to her specialization in school.

They used to go out on double dates for a while.

This is when two couples go out on a date together (a date is a formal social engagement, such as going to a movie or dinner).

Brassier.

A very old fashioned word for bra.

They were rubberized....and you could spread ointment on them.

"Rubberized" is to turn something into rubber, but this word is almost never used. "Ointment" is type of cream used for medical purposes.

Chattering teeth.

"To chatter" is to shake rapidly (Your teeth chatter if you're very cold).

If you wanted to get big laughs, you'd set it off.

"To get big laughs" is the goal of every stand-up comic!

"To set off" something is to start it up.

He did something horrendous, so all record were wiped out.

An interesting alternative for horrible or unspeakably bad.

The Secret Service used to count the silverware.

The "Secret Service" is the governmental agency responsible for guarding the President of the US. "Silverware" refers to forks, knives and spoons.

This stuff tastes awful. I could've made a fortune.

This is a useful word for "things" or in this case, a substance such as a food. (Many think that lots of "health food" doesn't taste very good).

These robots are uncanny.

An interesting word that means amazing, or almost unreal.

I've gone out with girls who had less movement than that.

A clever way for Miles to compare women and robots.

The Western District.

The name of the part of the country where Miles needs to go.

For 24 hours, I refused to eat grapes.

Refers to the fact that for years, many people in the US boycotted grapes to protest the mistreatment of farm workers.

We've been computerized, cataloged, finger printed, and voice printed.

The different ways a police state can identify citizens!

***Miles joins the underground in order to help overthrow the government, and quickly discovers the latest in modern robotics.***

I'm the wrong guy. I was beaten up by Quakers.

"To beat up" someone is to physically attack and harm them.

"Quakers" are a Christian group famous for their non-violence.

The Aires project.

The name of the project that Miles must work to stop with the help of the revolutionary underground.

God damn cheap Japanese flying packs.

A crude but common way to express anger

(Note that in 1973, Japanese goods were still better known for being cheaper, but not better, than the competition).

We still haven't located the alien, so we'd like to check your van.

A legal word for a foreigner or non-citizen.

Come on! I don't have all day.

The most versatile phrasal verb in English. Here, meaning "hurry up!"

Oh jeez, I was hoping for decent features.

A silly but not uncommon way to express disappointment.

The kitchen is on a single circuit system.

Here, referring to the electrical system.

Regulate the aromatron.

Not a word, but an interesting concept for a future word; "A smelling machine. "

Hi everyone. Long time, no see.

A common way for you to greet someone after a long time has passed since the last time you saw each other.

It's pure keen! It's koogat!

"Keen" can mean "cool" (i.e....slang for good), but "koogat" is not a word that exists as of 1999!

The orb.

A circular or spherical object (Here, used for physical pleasure).

Can I get a hit off that?

"To get a hit" off a cigarette is to smoke a puff, and it is usually used in reference to marijuana cigarettes.

Orgasmatron.

Another nonexistent word for an interesting Woody Allen idea!

The party came off quite well.

If something "comes off" well, this means it went well.

What makes people go berserk, anyway?

A somewhat slangy but useful word for violently crazy.

We can't understand the criminal element.

A very academic way to refer to criminals.

It's so deep.

In reference to philosophy, "deep" means profound or important.

They turn from caterpillars into butterflies.

The worm-like animals that later become butterflies.

The whole evening is spoiled.

Note that "spoiled" can refer to food, or periods of time.

Our leader wishes you a pleasant goodnight.

Only television in a police-state would say something so stupid (2173 appears very much like George Orwell's "1984").

Do you have something a little more esthetic?

If something is "esthetic," it is pretty or pleasing to the eye.

He acts peculiar.

A good word for odd, or strange (the adverb is actually "peculiarly").

***Luna discovers that Miles is not a robot, but an alien,  
and thus their relationship is off to a tense start.***

I was frozen in 1973...and thawed out.

A good way to say unfrozen. "To thaw" is to melt.

I knew I could count on you.

If you can "count on" somebody, you can trust and rely on them.

You're the alien!

In this case, the illegal foreigner or non citizen.

For god's sake, put yourself in my position!

A not uncommon way to express anger and frustration.

I wake up 200 years later and I'm Flash Gordon.

A famous character in comic books.

Occasionally, a customer would get botulism.

A type of food poisoning.

A substance resembling guacamole will come out of your ears!

A famous Mexican dip or sauce made from avocados.

I am a renowned poet.

Another word for famous, or possibly well respected.

I can't think straight.

"I can't think clearly."

Don't try anything funny while I'm gone.

"Don't try to escape or do anything stupid..."

A large and painful hickey.

This is a red sore caused by a kiss (usually found on a person's neck).

My god, I beat a man senseless with a strawberry.

"To beat someone senseless" is to hit them so much they can no longer think clearly.

What a way to go, to be pecked to death.

"What a way to go" is a colloquial way to say "what a way to die."

"To peck" is what a chicken does with his beak (to tap repeatedly).

A banana the size of a canoe.

A boat in which the passengers use paddles (large sticks for turning).

I'd hate to see what they use for fertilizer.

A natural material made from animal waste, used to help plants grow.

The body of a crab and the head of a social worker.

Simply noted as a very Woody Allenesque thing to say...

What the hell, I'm not really such a bad guy.

A colloquial way to say "After all is said and done..."

You're such a mess. You're so disheveled.

To be "disheveled" is to be dressed and groomed in a very messy way.

Sit down here, you little cutie.

A stupid thing to say to someone (though "cute" is a very nice word for pretty and/or charming).

We should be at the Eastern Parallel in half an hour.

The area of the country where Miles and Luna are going to.

Detain him somehow.

"To detain" someone is to keep them from moving elsewhere.

Straw? :: No thanks, I'm cool.

Here, a very 1960s way to say "No, thank you."

Hydrovac suit.

Another nonexistent phrase for a futuristic concept;  
A balloon-suit for swimming in the ocean.



Jesus, I can hardly find it.

A common word at the beginning of sentences to express anger, frustration or other emotion.

Use it as a disguise.

An important word for clothes, cosmetics or other things used to conceal one's identity.

Take her in and we'll have her programmed.

A term referring to computer software, in this case meaning brainwashed.

You've been contaminated by the alien.

If a person is "contaminated," they have been exposed to harmful or impure substances.

***Luna discovers just how horrible the government really is, and decides to help Miles find out about "The Aires Project."***

They really built these things, didn't they?

Here, Miles' way of saying "they really built these things well."

Register commies, not guns.

A bumper sticker popularized by the National Rifle Association ("Commies" is a silly slang word for communists).

"Cosmetic sexual technique and poetry."

The name of a ridiculous class that Luna took.

Rabies.

A dangerous viral disease caused by animal bites (and not to be confused with the word "babies").

A lady gave birth to triplets. I thought she was bit by a great dane.

A type of very big dog.

I'm a theological existential atheist.

Philosophically confused: "Theology" is the study of religion, but an "atheist" is someone who doesn't believe in god. In brief, an "existentialist" is a person who believes that life is without meaning, and that we are trapped in a cold and uncaring universe.

There is intelligence in the universe,  
with the possible exception of New Jersey.

The state next to New York, and along with California,  
the state that Woody Allen loves to make fun of the most.

For god's sake, get a grip on yourself!

Said to show strong emotion at the beginning of a sentence  
(this whole sentence means "calm down!").

I'm just a mulatto.

A person who has both black and white ancestry.

I'm always joking. It's a defense mechanism.

A term in modern psychology describing  
how people deal with insecurity.

Will I perform sex? :: No, but I'll rehearse.

These are two verbs more associated with actors who practice  
("rehearse") their parts before "performing" in front of a live audience,  
rather than the sexual context suggested here!

She was a hit man for the Mafia.

This is a person paid to murder other people.

I think you're bright and sensitive.

A good word for intelligent.

Men go crazy over me.

"To go crazy" over someone is to like them very much.

I got a Ph.D. in oral sex.

The highest academic degree (after a BA and MA).

Everyone is frigid, and all men are impotent.

Both word have strong sexual connotations: "Frigid" can mean very  
cold, but it is usually used for women who do not like to have sex.

"Impotent" means powerless, but it also refers to men who  
have trouble getting an erection.

Two minutes in bed with me and you'll sell that thing for scrap iron.

"Scrap iron" is left over metal that is melted down and reused.

The Western District. The Aires project

The place where Miles and Luna must go, and the  
project that they must discover and stop.

I'm like a cat. I'll always end up on my feet.

A good expression meaning "I'll always survive."

***Miles is captured by the government, and  
brainwashed into becoming an almost model citizen.***

Orientation advisor.

A Person who helps new students learn about a school.

Prepare for total brainwash.

A word to describe the process of fundamentally changing the way people think, usually done by governments or religious cults.

Be it black, white, whatever.

Here, meaning "any kind at all."

Miss personality and Miss congenial.

To be "congenial" is to be friendly and sociable.

Miss Montana.

A large state in the American West.

I have a new citizen to outfit.

"To outfit" somebody is to make them clothes that will fit right.

You want trousers? We got trousers.

A British word for "pants." The grammar and vocal intonation here is very stereotypical of New York's Jewish tailors.

Do you know what the hell you're doing?

Inserted into a sentence to add emotion, or in this case, show disbelief.

Why so much velvet?

This is a luxurious fabric.

Drop dead!

A very strong insult (said to someone you're angry at).

"Rags."

The name of Miles' "computerized dog."

OK, we'll take it in.

When used by a tailor, this means to reduce the size of the clothes to fit the person.

Is he housebroken, or will he leave batteries all over the floor?

"Housebroken" is the curious word used for cats and dogs who have learned to no longer piss or "poop" where they are not supposed to.

Don't yell! We're with the underground.

The secret political movement fighting the government.

The one with the long blond hair and great tomatoes.

A totally ridiculous (and dated) way to refer to female breasts.

Absolved.

An official word meaning forgiven, or perhaps to be found innocent.

***Luna returns with her friends in order to "reprogram " Miles, so that he will join the underground again.***

We were outlaws?

An important word for criminals wanted by the police

God damn dog.

A common and crude way to add emotion and anger.

We'll induce a hypnotic state, and hopefully this will shatter his new personality.

A "hypnotic state " is a state of consciousness when people are very easily influenced to believe different things. "To shatter" is a powerful verb meaning to break into many pieces.

Soon the Passover holidays are coming.

An important Jewish holiday.

She thinks I'm a pervert because I drank our waterbed.

A classic line: "A pervert" is a sick or deviate person, and a "waterbed" is, obviously, a bed filled with water (popular in the 1970s).

Oy vey, what will the goyem say?

Jewish English!: "Oy vey" is Yiddish for "oh, my god" while "goyem" is a Yiddish word for a non-jew. Although these words are Yiddish (the language spoken by Jews in Eastern Europe), they're used by lots of Americans today, especially American Jews!

Blanche Du Bois.

The famous hero in the movie "A Streetcar Named Desire," which was a play written by Tennessee Williams in the 1950s,

Just play along with him.

"To play along" with someone is to pretend you agree with what they are saying, even though in reality you may think they're crazy.

Strange that I should be called a destitute woman.

Poetic grammar with the "It's" missing at the beginning of the sentence. "Destitute" means impoverished or without money.

Well I say "ha! "

A famous line said originally by the American actor Marlon Brando. Here, the sentence means approximately "nonsense!" or more crudely, "bullshit."

I've always depended on the kindness of strangers.

A truly classic line from "A Streetcar Named Desire."

We all live on our cunning and our instincts.

"Cunning" is a powerful word referring to the ability to fool and manipulate people.

Government by the workers and the downtrodden masses.

A somewhat dated and Marxist way to describe the majority of people, who are poor and exploited.

She was a Trotskyist who became a Jesus freak...

and was arrested for selling pornographic connect-a-dots.

A truly interesting person! A "Trotskyist" is a communist who follows the political philosophy of Leon Trotsky. A "Jesus freak" is a term used to describe hippies in the 60s who became what are often referred to as born-again Christians. "Connect a dot puzzles" are those in which you literally connect dots to create a drawing.

Right, darling.

The most common name of affection for couples.

We'll steal operating gowns and pose as doctors.

The uniforms that doctors wear during an operation

Peasants!

Small or poor farmers (Often used as an insult to mean a simple or unsophisticated person).

You're shaking like a leaf!

One way to say "you look extremely nervous."

The rebel with wall-to-wall muscles.

A phrase usually referring to carpet, and not muscles.

Free love? I've created a bohemian monster.

"Free love" is the philosophy that people should have sex with whoever they want. A "bohemian" is an artist or intellectual with tastes and behavior that upsets most of conservative society.

Tramp!

A somewhat crude insult for a promiscuous woman or prostitute.

Group sex with the robots.

Sex between lots of people (often called an "orgy").

Miss pseudo-intellectual neo-fascist Hegelian.

"Pseudo-" is a useful prefix meaning false or fake. "Neo" means new, and "Hegelian" refers to the philosopher Hegel.

***Miles and Luna set out to spy on the government, and soon discover an amazing secret about the Leader of the State.***

If this gets screwed up, it's because of you.

A very common way of saying done very badly, or even destroyed.

We've been over all of this.

"We've already discussed this."

Manual...dual control...fast forward...rewind.

Instructions that are found on a tape recorder.

All right, the coast is clear.

A useful expression meaning "nobody is watching us" or, "there is no danger."

Erno's got capped teeth.

Teeth that are treated by a dentist to make them look good.

We're big doctors, not impostors.

An "imposter" is a person who pretends to be somebody that he isn't, by using a false name and identity.

This is a bad break.

A good way to say a bad piece of luck.

Aries day is here!

The day that Miles and Luna are trying to prevent.

I'm in the throes of a major crisis.

An educated word for an agonizing struggle or pain.

Using great presence of mind.

A good expression for calm and rational thinking.

Through massive biochemical effort.

"Massive" is a powerful adjective meaning huge or enormous.

Cloning.

The act of duplicating an entire organism from one cell of that organism (Not yet possible with humans, though this was done with a famous British sheep named "Dolly" in 1998).

We feel confident that we can produce our leader from his nose.

Just a funny thing to say...

Phase 2 is the execution of all dissidents.

"To execute" someone is to put them to death, usually by shooting them. A "dissident" is an enemy or opponents of the government.

The leader has a tremendous handicap. He has no face or body.

Another adjective for huge or extremely large.

Now is the time to strike!

"To strike" is to hit, but here it means to take decisive action.

They're in a state of chaos.

An important word meaning complete disorder and confusion.

Get a grip of yourself!

One way to tell someone to calm down.

It's too subtle.

This is an important word meaning difficult to notice.

***Miles and Luna prepare to operate on the Presidential nose...  
and strike a major blow against the fascist state.***

You create a diversion and I'll take the nose.

A "diversion" is something that distracts people,  
or attracts their attention.

We're hear to see the nose. I heard it was running.

A ridiculous joke: A person with a cold has "a runny nose"

Genetically programmed.

Changed through the manipulation of genes ("DNA").

He's in a lot worse shape than I thought.

"To be in bad shape" is to not be doing well,  
either physically or emotionally.

He's got to lay off Armenian women.

"To lay off" something is to stop doing it. A silly thing to say.

The Pinnocchio effect. The square root of the sinuses is equal to 7.

Pinnocchio is a famous character in children's literature whose nose  
grows whenever he tells a lie. A "square root" of a number is that  
number which when multiplied by itself, equals the original number  
(i.e....7 is the square root of 49). "Sinuses" are your nasal passages.

I diagnosed the entire situation. We're dealing with a nose.

"To diagnose" something is to carefully analyze it.

We'll clone him into his suit, and then we can get the hell out of here.

A very colloquial and common way to say "leave very quickly."

Time to check the cell structure.

A "cell" is a biological word that refers to the smallest unit of  
an organism that is capable of functioning independently.

Nostrilectomy.

A word which probably doesn't exist ("removal of the nostrils").

Strap the mask on your face.

Note the use of "strap" as a verb, meaning to put on.

What's wrong? Too voluminous?

A very technical word which means huge, or having great volume.



Don't move, or he gets it right between the eyes.

Usually said as a threat to shoot someone (but a particularly ridiculous threat to make when the person is simply a nose!)

He's bluffing! He wouldn't shoot the nose!

"To bluff" is a very useful verb meaning to mislead, or to pretend to be stronger than you really are.

An eye for an eye...and a nose for a nose.

An expression from the bible: "We will do to you what you do to us."

I got a migraine.

A type of very painful headache

My analyst is a strict Freudian.

An "analyst" is another word for psychologist (or, psychoanalyst).  
"Freudian" is from the German psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud.

I'm not knocking Erno.

"To knock" someone is a colloquial way of saying to criticize them.

You like tall, blond nordic, aryan nazi types.

Adjectives describing blond-haired people from Northern Europe (in the right context, often associated with nazi propaganda).

We all get on each other's nerves sooner or later.

"To get on a person's nerves" is a common way to say irritate them.

Science is an intellectual dead end.

A "dead end" is a street which does not allow passage, but it can also refer to a basic idea or concept (such as science), implying that no more progress can be made with it.

Guys in tweed suits cutting up frogs on foundation grants.

"Tweed" is a type of fabric. "Foundation grants" are gifts of money given by rich charities, such as the Ford Foundation.

At least after death, you're not nauseous.

An important word describing someone who is sick to their stomach.

# **Sleeper**

## **Some Potential Questions for ESL Class Discussion**

1. For you, what were the funniest scenes in the movie?
2. Is Woody Allen's vision of the future positive or negative?
3. What were the most interesting features of life in 2173?
4. What do you think life will really be like in 2173?
5. If you could be frozen for 200 years, would you do it?